GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
LAW AND JUSTICE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:549
ANSWERED ON:21.11.2002
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ELECTORAL REFORMS
PRABHA RAU

Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) the recommendations made to the Government suggesting Electoral Reforms by various committees appointed by them and made in other fora including the Election Commission and the Apex Court, waiting implementation; and

(b) the time by which the Government propose to implement them?

Answer

MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI K. JANA KRISHNAMURTHI)

(a) & (b): The Government has recently introduced several Bills seeking to give effect to recommendations of a number of Committees and Commissions. These include the Election Laws (Amendment) Bill, 1999, the Representation of the People (Amendment) Bill, 2001 and the Election and Other Related Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2002 covering the following areas, namely, facility of proxy voting to the armed forces personnel, (recommended by Election Commission of India) open ballot system in respect of elections to Rajya Sabha (Recommended by Ethics Committee of Parliament) and providing means of Funding of elections to the political parties (recommended by Dinesh Goswami Committee, Indrajit Gupta Committee. Law Commission of India, Election Commission of India and the National Commission to Review the Working of the Constitution) respectively.The Government also intends to introduce the Representation of the People (Amendment) Bill, 2002 which seeks to implement the consensus arrived at in the all Parties meetings held on 8-7-2002 and 2-8-2002 on certain aspects of criminalisation of politics. The latter would take into account some of the concerns expressed in the directions given by the Supreme Court to the Election Commission of India on 2-5-2002 in Civil Appeal No.7178 of 2001. The Representation of the People (Second Amendment) Bill, 2002, is also proposed to be introduced in the current session, seeks to rationalize sub-sections (1) (2) and (3) of section 8 of the Representation of the People Act, 1951 (as recommended by the Election Commission of India, the National Commission for Women, etc.).The process of reform of electoral laws is a continuous and ongoing process and can be carried out only through consensus among political parties which is a time consuming process and therefore no time frame can be suggested in this regard.